

9. Please describe the nature of your work at the PATH Intl. center or describe your career plan after completing your EAAT coursework.

I've been involved with Marion Therapeutic Riding Association as a volunteer, PATH Int'l, certified instructor, board member/officer, fund raiser, caretaker of our site as well as caretaker of the program horses for the past twelve years. I am as comfortable on a tractor as I am atop of any of our wonderfully gifted equines. Although I am considered "staff", the only compensation that I have accepted was housing when I was asked if I would take over the caretaker position so that someone would be on the property the majority of the day and throughout the night.

My plan is to continue for as long as I can with MTRA as instructor/mentor of our very special riders and volunteers. I would like to see additional programs added to our schedule, including a special day for kids in foster care due to the placement by the Florida Department of Children and Families as well as continue to build on our program for the students at Hillcrest School for Exceptional Children, our program for riders that have been facing the challenges of Multiple Sclerosis, and our riders with a broad spectrum of cognitive, emotional and physical differences that can be forgotten for that time that they are riding their special horse at MTRA.

I would also like to find new and exciting teaching tools to enhance the skill levels of all of our riders and volunteers as well as continue to make their lesson time an adventure that also improves their emotional and physical well being.

10. What are your goals in the field of equine assisted activities and therapies?

- Continue to help MTRA grow and provide the safest and most nurturing riding opportunities for any person that has emotional, cognitive and physical challenges
- Build a strong volunteer education and mentoring program that provides them with the skills that are needed in horse handling, communication and knowledge of our program so that they continue to know how important they are to our therapeutic riding program.
- Continue to build on the program for our therapeutic riding clients so that they have the opportunities to learn to properly halter and lead the horses that they ride, to learn the parts of their tack and the parts of the horse and to learn about horse care from feeding, to what the veterinarian does for our horses, to why the farrier has to come out on a regular basis and of course the equine dentists, etc.

11. How do you think attending the PATH Intl. National Conference and Annual Meeting will help you in your work and goals in the field of equine assisted activities and therapies?

When I left the conferences that I have had the opportunity to attend, I came home with so much information and new tools and skills for classes, including adaptive equipment, skill building games, administrative assistance, board building and so much more. All of the attendees from other centers were so full of information and ideas and excited to share what they are doing and it was all so helpful and because PATH is growing, the knowledge we, as PATH members, instructors and volunteers, are growing too.